

Washington State Senator • 1st Legislative District

Rosemary McAuliffe

2012 Legislative Report



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Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe

represents the 1st Legislative District, covering parts of Snohomish County, including Bothell, Mountlake Terrace, Maltby and Brier. She is chair of the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee and serves on the Senate Human Services & Corrections Committee and the Senate Rules Committee.

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for allowing me to serve the 1st Legislative District. I work my hardest all year long, especially during the legislative session, to represent you to the best of my ability.

While this year offered some of the greatest state budget challenges, we also achieved many wins. Please read on for more detail.

In news closer to home, I want to invite you to visit the new 1st District office at Country Village in Bothell! I'm proud to finally open an office closer to the people I represent. I share this office with my seatmate, Rep. Luis Moscoso.

I welcome you to stop by or contact my office for an appointment.

Sincerely,

Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, 1st Legislative District

New district office:

Country Village
817 238th St. SE, Suite L
Bothell, WA 98021
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Washington wins \$60 million in Race to the Top federal grants for early learning

On December 16, 2011, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced the winners—including Washington—of the \$500 million Race to the Top grant to support bold and comprehensive state plans for raising the quality of early learning programs. Washington will receive \$60 million over four years to advance our early learning system.

According to the state Dept. of Early Learning, every dollar invested in high-quality early learning can return up to \$17 in benefits, ranging from lower costs for special

education and repeat grades, to lower child welfare and public health costs.

If kids get the high-quality early learning opportunities they need, that sets them up for greater success when they reach the K-12 system and throughout life. This incredible opportunity means that the more than 73,000 children who start kindergarten in Washington each year will hit the ground running. I commend Washington's Dept. of Early Learning who continues to be a national early learning leader.

WaKIDS statewide kindergarten assessment

A new law phases-in statewide implementation of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS).

WaKIDS brings families, teachers and early learning providers together to support children's learning and transition into public schools. Each child is assessed for their social/emotional, cognitive, language/literacy and physical development in the classroom. I sponsored the companion to House Bill 2586 and was the lead advocate in the Senate.

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, WaKIDS must be administered to all students enrolled in state-funded full-day kindergarten programs with the exception of students who have been excused from participation by their parents or guardians. Enhancing WaKIDS is part of Washington's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant efforts.

This is one of the most important bills we will ever pass due to the impact on learning for our littlest learners. All children are capable of learning, achieving and making developmental progress regardless of their physical or emotional conditions, backgrounds, or experiences.

More elementary kids will engage in science, technology, engineering and math

Today's most in-demand, lucrative careers involve science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects. Washington ranks second in the national innovation economy. However, these in-demand jobs are mostly filled by recruits from around the nation and world, not our children, because not enough students graduate with STEM degrees.



We must make STEM subjects fun, relevant and engaging from kids' earliest years on up. Innovative lighthouse schools are already shining the light in middle and high schools. Now, through a bill I sponsored, the lighthouse program is expanded to our littlest learners in elementary school. Leading STEM schools will provide technical assistance to other schools and communities that want to create schools with a STEM focus. This will help prepare kids for global careers right here in Washington state and beyond. (Senate Bill 6041)

We must listen to the McCleary lawsuit and fully fund basic education

I am proud of education reforms Washington state has accomplished in the last 20 plus years—many widely supported by business, teachers, parents and advocacy groups. Each step forward represents collaborative progress that has been tested in the classroom. The research has been done, the laws have been passed. Now, we need to fund the reforms so every child has a high quality education.

Nowhere is this message clearer than the recent McCleary lawsuit decision which calls for at least \$1.5 billion more a year for K-12 education by 2018. Along with inflation and six years of pent up demand for salary increases, this could mean a cost \$8.3 billion per biennium beyond the current budget. The Supreme Court has affirmed what we already knew, that we must reform basic education and pay for it.

No amount of shifting state dollars or slashing of health and human services will free up the kind of money needed to fully fund the reforms we know our kids deserve. Unfortunately, there is a chronic history in our state of passing reforms, but never funding them. With education as our paramount duty, we need the public's support of new revenue to achieve full implementation of reforms.

This session we established a joint task force to make recommendations for a funding mechanism to support full implementation of basic education. We also repealed I-728, to reduce class size and other education improvements, because these efforts are incorporated into the new basic education reforms. (House Bill 2824)

Teacher and principal evaluations enhanced to ensure high-quality education

Incorporating the results from pilot projects, this session a new law updates the teacher and principal evaluation system. Senate Bill 5895 establishes greater detail for the four-tier teacher/principal evaluation system—which will go statewide by 2015-16 after the pilot projects have completed tests of what works best. Before 2010, teachers were given either a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade under a two-tier system. This new system will give teachers the tools to ensure every child has a high-quality education.

The new law will:

- Add greater specificity and provide expectations for a new teacher and principal evaluation system with four common levels, with one being the lowest evaluation and four being the highest;
- Incorporate student growth data as a substantial factor in evaluations;
- Allow student input for teacher evaluations, and school building employees input for principal evaluations;
- Require that evaluation results are one factor used to make staffing decisions;
- Establish an implementation schedule;
- Define “not satisfactory” and require a teacher or principal to participate in the probation process in existing law; and
- Require a steering committee to examine implementation issues and produce an annual report.



Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe with Governor Chris Gregoire and lawmakers at teacher evaluation bill signing

Washington now seventh state in nation to embrace marriage equality

For decades our country has struggled with discrimination in many forms. I am proud that our state has a history of joining together to support equality for women, racial minorities, people with disabilities and different religions.

Separate but equal is yet another form of discrimination. On Feb. 14 Washington gave all families the respect and dignity they deserve by signing marriage equality into law. Senate Bill 6239 makes Washington the seventh state in the nation to legalize same-sex marriage, in addition to Washington, D.C. With the signing, Washington also becomes the first state in the country to strike down state law that specifically limits marriage to one man and one woman.

Child gun accidents raise awareness for need of gun safety programs

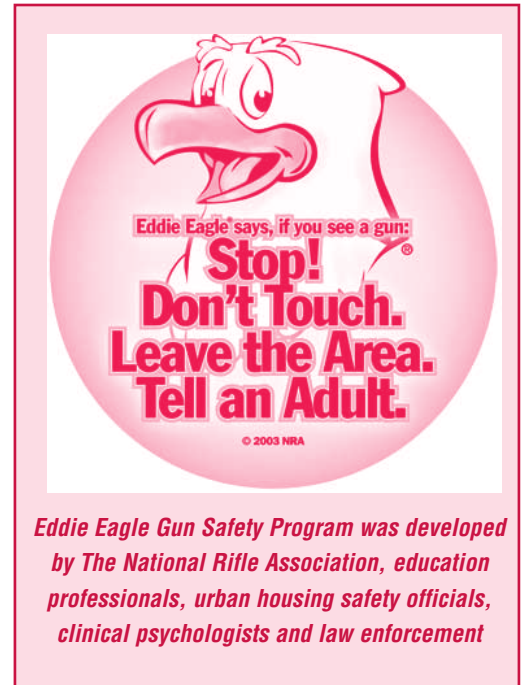
In the past few months, three children in Washington state have been shot—two of them killed—because the owners of guns didn't lock them up tight. In response I introduced Senate Joint Resolution 8020 to promote the use of the Eddie Eagle Gun Safety Program in preschools, early learning programs and schools.

Teaching children to act safely around firearms is a critical step in the effort to reduce the number of accidents among children. I have introduced gun lock box legislation in the past, but regardless, children will still come across guns and need to be able to handle the situation safely. By education and awareness we can help kids prevent senseless and tragic gun accidents.

Eddie Eagle, the program's lovable feathered mascot, teaches kids that guns are not toys. When a child sees a gun they should: STOP, don't touch, leave the area and tell an adult.

Since the Gun Safety program began in 1988, it has reached more than twenty-one million children, in all fifty states.

I encourage every city, police department and community to adopt a gun safety program so together we can help our littlest citizens protect themselves.



Infrastructure projects will create 18,000 jobs

The state's 2012 capital budget invests approximately \$1.1 billion in economic development projects statewide, targeted in areas with a proven track record of producing economic growth. We don't want just short-term jobs. We want investments that accelerate our recovery and drive long-term, private sector economic growth. Investments in skills centers (\$500,000 for the conceptual design of the Innovation Partnership Zone Washington MedTech Discovery Center), in college buildings (\$62.8 million for UW Bothell's shovel ready science building), and in economic development infrastructure will put people to work and help transform our economy. This budget projects 18,000 new jobs. (Senate Bill 6074 and Senate Bill 5127)



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